

Draft by
M.P.C.
10 Dec 56

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ (p. 6 and other pages as marked)
-Draft-

70 Jan 57

10 December 1956

M.P.C.

Memorandum for the Director

Subject: Public Disclosures and Controversy on the Alleged Influence of RFE, CIA, and other U.S. Activities Behind the Hungarian Uprising of October 22-23, 1956

1. This memorandum is for information only.

2. Attached (as tabs A to E) are texts, in press-clipping form, of all the public comments, totalling about 260 items, for the period from October 22 to December 31, 1956, which have been found to bear significantly on the still-continuing controversy whether Radio Free Europe (RFE) and other unofficial or official U.S. activities (covert and overt) had figured importantly (or at all) in the outbreak of the Hungarian uprising of October 22-23, 1956. Also included (as Tab F) is a selection of pertinent press comment before October 22, in so far as it was relevant to point up the similarities or differences of opinion, before and after the revolt, on the general issue of Western encouragement to ~~Satellite~~ ^{alleged} ~~rebels~~ the anti-Communists in Hungary.

3. While this compilation represents an extensive outpouring of public discussion (both at home and abroad) and numerous ~~in~~ examples of intelligence publicity and disclosures of intelligence activities, it is not as extensive as numerous other, related clippings (not included here, and totalling about 800 items) on other aspects of the recent and current Hungarian situation in which CIA may be directly or indirectly involved, such as (for example):

- a. battle news and "combat intelligence" of the revolt;
 - b. the pleas of Hungarian rebels for U.S. help;
 - c. the praise (or criticism) of U.S. policies later in the revolt and counter-attack by the USSR
 - d. intelligence exploitation of Hungarian refugees in the weeks after Nov. 4;
 - e. the security problems of the U.S. and other Western nations in handling such refugees; and
- the original uprising.

- 2 -

4. Radio Free Europe, as an alleged factor leading up to the revolt, is mentioned or discussed specifically by name, in only 30 of the 150 items attached, but by implication it figures in most of the other comments as well, especially in those comments that deal with radio propaganda in general, balloon leaflets (with which RFE is frequently identified), U. S. psychological warfare in general, and U. S.-sponsored or directed covert activities in Hungary disclosed since October 22. In general, in ^{more} recent days the public comments, whether friendly or unfriendly, have tended to subordinate RFE to the broader issue whether U. S. cold-war activities figured at all in inciting the revolt, and (if they did) whether such activities are morally defensible or politically and militarily effective.

5. CIA is mentioned, directly by name or in the name of the director, in 50 of the 150 comments, in the following three ways: RFE's overt radio-broadcast and balloon-leaflet programs, ^{beginning about} next (2) in relation to U. S.-sponsored covert activities allegedly undertaken in Hungary before the revolt; and ^{finally} (3) as the producer of intelligence estimates and warnings that predicted (or failed to predict) the revolt. On the latter two quite separate and compartmented factors, it is ~~interesting to note~~ ^{worthy} that some of those who have "blamed" CIA for instigating the revolt have frequently also "blamed" CIA for being surprised at the revolt! Similarly, this somewhat illogical argument also is reflected in reverse, in the comments of those who have simultaneously praised CIA for not being involved operationally and applauded CIA for knowing in advance that the revolt was ^{indeed} coming.

- 3 -

6. It is noteworthy, ^{also} that the 150-some press comments since October 23 are about evenly divided between (a) U. S. and other Western comments (67 ^{notable figures} items) and (b) Soviet and other Communist comments (68 ^{ditto} items). (Very few items of comment originating with neutralist or Communist spokesmen in Asia have been found so far, in the American press, evidently because India and Communist China, in particular, have in general remained aloof, publicly, from the issues involved.) This 2-way statistical distribution between Free World and Communist ^{publicity} ~~opinion~~ on Hungary illustrates graphically the fact that the history of the origins of the October 22-23 revolt has in recent weeks become both a "domestic" issue (within the United States, and perhaps among the Allies generally) and an international political and propaganda issue (that is, between the U. S. and the Soviet Union,) with the Asian neutrals (and perhaps Western Europe, too) not taking sides to any considerable extent.

7. Within the U. S., the alleged "RFE" and "CIA" incitement of the Hungarian revolt seems to have been less a matter of partisan debate than a variety of disagreements as to the nature, ^{and effectiveness of} ~~and extent of the U. S.~~ ^{U.S.} responsibilities for world leadership. In this situation, furthermore, there have been a number of cases, some official and others unofficial comment, where individual spokesmen have changed their public position during America's "agonizing reappraisal" since ^{the 10-day period} ~~October 22~~ ^{November 5}. The domestic criticisms of CIA itself seem to have been fewer and less bitter (in the American press) than those that were being levelled (concurrently, since October 29) at CIA's intelligence estimates and warnings on British, French, and Israeli's political intentions and military plans in the Suez area.

- 4 -

recheck figure?

8. Outside the U. S., the 70-some public comments published abroad reveal, chiefly, the manner in which the Soviet Union has fabricated a changing propaganda line, beginning initially (about Oct. 22-27) with a measure of sympathy for the "reformist" Nagy regime and drastically revised, beginning October 28, to an increasingly bitter denunciation of the U. S., in particular, for its overt radio and leaflet propaganda, its covert recruitment and training of "Horthyite" agents in Western Europe, and its paramilitary preparations with cached arms, supplies, etc. (See ... below, ^{GST study} on FBIS transcripts)

9. Somewhat in contrast with this ^{Soviet} propaganda line, the press and radio comments by the National Communist Parties (both among the Satellites and in the West) have revealed their ^{peculiar} dilemmas and their frequently shifting and contradictory positions. Illustrating this dilemma was the U. S. Communist Party, which (in the N. Y. Daily Worker) has revealed four ^{distinct} successive and variously contradictory positions during the seven-week period since October 22. Furthermore, in much of this Communist comment (whether Soviet or national Communist in origin), the attacks are less frequently against "RFE" or "CIA" as such, than at the U. S. Executive and Legislative Branches in toto, and at the "capitalists" behind them. Incidentally, there is almost no Communist comment on British or other western "subversion" of Hungary, except for a few somewhat casual criticisms of BBC, in relation to RFE.

Side
reading

Intelligence "Surprise" at ^{- 5 -} Oct. 22 Revolt

9. U. S. official comments on the adequacy of intelligence were as follows, and in ^{general} ~~several~~ suggested that the revolt ^{of October 22-23} was a surprise. On Sunday, October 21, Secretary Dulles, commenting on Polish and other Satellite unrest, ^{on a TV broadcast interview,} ~~apparently~~ did not mention the Hungarian revolt ^{at all.} ~~but the original text has not been found as yet.~~ ^{to verify that point.} On October 24 (the second day of the revolt), the State Department and the U. S. Government were said (by James Reston) to be "obviously...somewhat surprised," because (he said, by way of example) the U. S. mission chief was abroad when the revolt took place. Two weeks later the State Department was said (by Ed Koterba) to have "officially admitted" that it was caught by surprise on October 22-23. (The texts of the original statements, if any, by the State Department in these two cases have not shown up in the clippings ^{seen in this study,} but there is no reason to question the reliability of the secondary reports by Reston and Koterba on these specific points.)

10. Some days later (sometime between Nov. 11 and 17, but ^{was said to have} the date is not indicated), the DCI [^] "categorically denied" to Senator Mansfield that U. S. intelligence was "caught napping" in Hungary, but the quotation (as attributed to Mr. Dulles by Robert S. Allen) is not clear whether Mr. Dulles was referring to the outbreak of the revolt (on Oct. 22-23) or to the Soviet occupation and counter-attack (some several days later). ^{In any case,} Mr. Dulles was ^{further} ~~however~~ quoted ^{again} (by R. S. Allen) as "asserting" that "CIA had submitted numerous reports on unrest in the Satellites and the likelihood of uprisings," but ^{concluding} that "it is difficult to forecast the exact timing of such revolts." Meanwhile,

- 6 -

on Nov^{ember} 11, Mr. Dulles said publicly (in a speech before a group of college educators) that the revolt was a "miracle" which "pessimists had always predicted was impossible." Later, on November 27, in somewhat the same vein, Mr. Dulles said^{publicly} (at Yale Law School) that the all-out^{anti-Communist} nature of the Hungarian uprising "tended to disprove the theory, so long held, that revolt against a tyranny equipped with the modern weapons of war was foredoomed to failure." Presumably Mr. Dulles' references to pessimistic theories were to U. S.-produced intelligence evaluations, estimates and warnings and other expert evaluations.

11. The unpredictable character of the original Hungarian revolt of October 22-23 was also echoed by various unofficial commentators in the U. S. On November 6 the Houston Chronicle charged that CIA "was caught flatfooted by both the Hungarian revolt and the Russian double-cross." ^{On November 9, Ed Kotler said that "of course" the U.S. "was taken by absolute surprise."} On Sunday, November 18, Senator Mansfield charged (apparently for a second time) that "We were caught by surprise...in Hungary" (as well as in Poland and the Middle East).

* ||

12. ~~After CIA's briefing of selected reporters at the Carlton hotel on November 19, Richard Wilson wrote (Nov. 21, Minneapolis Tribune)~~ ^{one of the newspapers} that CIA did provide "a forecast...long in advance that something was ripening in Hungary and Poland, although it did not fix a date or a close range of dates for outbreak." This same statement was published verbatim by Frederic W. Collins (Nov. 21, in Providence Journal-Bulletin), ^{had also been present at the Carlton briefing. Collins} who added that, "In Hungary, it was perhaps impossible to tell until the last instant when underlying hatreds of the

* ||

- 7 -

Russians would break through the surface. When it came it came with the sparking of an incident during a seemingly peaceful demonstration."

~~The latter quotation may have come from the CIA briefing,~~ ^{also} Royce ^{just none of this}

Brier, in the San Francisco Chronicle (also ^{on} Nov. 21), took a somewhat different view. He charged that "CIA listening posts" in Vienna and Budapest "drew a blank," and questioned whether CIA had a "reliable" warning mechanism for such crises. Robert Roth, commenting on

November 25 (Philadelphia Bulletin), said that CIA was "long aware" of Hungarian unrest but ^{was} "unable to provide...a firm estimate" of "the circumstances that did develop." In addition, ^{Roth said that} there was "no intelligence information on how Russia would react." ~~Roth said.~~ In summary,

only eight editorial writers and one Congressman have commented on the issue of intelligence "surprise," and ^{no} ~~these~~ comments have appeared during ^{the past two weeks, that is, since,} ~~between October 24 and November 25, 1956~~ Presumably this

issue has died down ^{both} in the American press and ~~in the~~ in the U.S. Congress. ~~both~~ Senator

Humphreys' statement ^{on Hungary} (of Dec. 9), ^{for example,} ~~makes no~~

makes no reference ^{whatever} to the ^{issue of} intelligence ~~surprise~~.

Is a statement I myself came directly attributed

Side
heading

RFE's "Incitement" of Oct. 22⁸ Revolt

12. A more widely discussed issue, and one that eventually has become more controversial than the ^{issue of} intelligence ^{"propaganda"} issue, was whether RFE and other U. S. propaganda media provided "incitement" to the Hungarians to revolt. According to the ^{150-some} clippings seen ^{in this study,} the RFE issue was first raised, in the American press, quite favorably to RFE, on October 29--at a time when (a whole week after the revolt had begun, but before the Soviet counter-attack had begun) it was commonly predicted that the Hungarians would achieve at least limited success. On October 29, the ~~commentator~~ ^{congratulator}, Ed Sullivan, ~~credited~~ ^{credited} RFE (along with the Catholic Church and the "underground" in Hungary) with having kept alive the spark of freedom there and in Poland. Similarly, on October 29, RFE's news chief for Hungary, Laszlo Fekitikuty, gave RFE ^{partial} credit as a "contributing factor" in the uprisings. ^{9 13.} Simultaneously and conversely, RFE was also subjected to attack by the Soviet press for the same reasons, ^{applied} in reverse. ^{9 13.} Beginning October 28 (noted Oct. 29 in the American press), Pravda, Izvestia, and other Moscow media launched what William J. Jordan (N. Y. Times, Oct. 29) called a new "major campaign to try to pin blame for the revolt...on the United States." In this new Soviet propaganda line of October 28-29, RFE was (for the first time ^{the revolt} ~~during those days~~) accused of spreading "dirty rumors," along with and in coordination with U. S.-sponsored leaflet campaigns, espionage, and "subversive" activities. In this line, RFE was listed as the third of three factors blamed by the Soviet Union.

9
Moscow
Radio, Oct 29:


- 9 -

13. During the next six weeks (Oct. 29 to Dec. 7) this Soviet line on RFE has been maintained. Meanwhile in the American press, there has been not a single ~~line of opinion~~ ^{type of opinion} but a great ~~variety~~ ^{diversity} of comments on RFE, both by U. S. officials and by unofficial leaders of opinion; and most of them have been friendly and sympathetic to the dilemma which has come to pass in the position of the U. S. ^{in the anti-Communist struggle.} Included in these American comments were not only what might be called "black" and "white" comments, levelling blame and praise, respectively, at RFE, but also a number of more balanced, critical reviews in which RFE's functions have been evaluated more broadly in relationship to the total U. S. program of encouraging anti-Communism in Eastern Europe and throughout the world generally. These domestic comments, furthermore, include some that have represented a change in position arrived at some time after the Soviets launched their counter-attack early in November.

14. Of special interest, on the RFE issue, are the public comments of the Hungarian exile leaders, including both the older established exiles and those who have fled from the Soviet counter-attack only in recent days and weeks. One of the chief older exiles, Ferenc Nagy of Herndon, Va., when interviewed in Paris sometime late in October (U. S. News and World Report, Nov. 2), gave a lengthy analysis of the origins of the revolt, in which he did not once mention West-inspired radio broadcasts or Western intervention of any kind. ^{as a factor in the revolt.} On or about November 20 (or earlier), in another interview, ^{Ferenc} Nagy categorically stated that "all the talk" about RFE (and VOA) as a factor in the revolt is "false," and added that "they only wanted to keep up the spirit of the people" (Washington Post, Nov. 21). On the other side, Anna Kethly,

- 9a -

interviewed in Brussels on November 29, accused RFE of leading the
Hungarians to believe that Western military aid was forthcoming,
and of falsely reporting (and compromising) her own position



- 10 -

as an alleged active underground leader, ^{in one RFE broadcast in particular.} In the same vein, three other Hungarian rebel leaders, ^{unidentified by name.} said that RFE had given them "false hope," but they acknowledged (according to RFE officials, Nov. 29), that, in the heat of battle, they were not sure whether it was RFE or "other radio stations" that they ^{were} ~~had~~ listening to.

15. Among the anti-Communist fighters in Budapest there were occasional assertions, made by unidentified leaders in the heat of battle, to the effect that U. S. radio broadcasts had "encouraged the Hungarians to take up arms to fight communism" (for example, AP from Vienna, Nov. 4 and 6). ^{Such} ~~These~~ comments, it appears from ^{a study of} the clippings, were ^{apparently} not made, however, until after the Russian counter-attack was vigorously underway. This was at a time when the rebels were desperately seeking whatever aid they could muster, and their "accusations" at RFE, ^{by} ~~at~~ that ^{later} ~~late~~ date, can probably be interpreted ^{in retrospect} as simply a desperate attempt to "shame" U. S. sympathizers ^{into} ~~to~~ helping them. In the same vein, the Hungarian-born actress Ilona Massey said (November 20, in Washington, D. C.) that she was "ashamed" to say that U. S. "promises" to aid Hungary, which she alleged were ^{broadcast} ~~delivered~~ by RFE and VOA, have not been carried out. ^{One "Freedom"} ~~However, another street fighter,~~ one Laszlo Istvan, ^{allegedly} ~~while he~~ acknowledged (on Nov. 26, after he had fled) that he and his compatriots ^{had} "listened avidly" to RFE pleas to engage in strikes, ^{but he} ~~said~~ that "once our revolution got underway we didn't take the radio seriously."